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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Santa Cruz County School Superintendent Pleads Guilty to Conflict of Interest, Resigns Post

(Phoenix, Ariz. – April 21, 2006) Attorney General Terry Goddard today announced that Santa Cruz County School Superintendent Robert Canchola, 49, pleaded guilty to conflict of interest, a class six felony.

The plea agreement requires Canchola, of Rio Rico, to resign his position immediately and pay restitution of up to \$42,000. According to court documents, Canchola admitted that while in his position as School Superintendent, he failed to notify county officials that his wife had a substantial interest in LD Consulting Services, a company that was awarded school-related contracts awarded between 1999 and 2003. The Arizona Auditor General's Office conducted the investigation that led to a November 2005 indictment.

Canchola is scheduled to appear before Judge Raymond Weaver on June 1 for sentencing and faces up to two years in prison. Weaver, a retired Yavapai County judge, is hearing the case because the Santa Cruz County judges declared a conflict. Assistant Attorney General John Evans is prosecuting this case.

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